

PART VI

Livestock, Dairying and Poultry

General Importance

Livestock, dairying and poultry are secondary activities in Lincoln County when compared with field crops. In 1954 Lincoln County had the third highest income in the state from crops (\$26,275,000), but ranked twenty-first in income from livestock and livestock products (\$2,398,000). During 1954, animals and their products contributed only 8.3 percent of the dollar value of all products sold from farms. Animal industries grossed \$2,398,318 in 1954. Cattle raising dominates the the livestock industry with \$1,789,366 in cattle sales reported. Calves alone brought income of \$615,700 to Lincoln County cattlemen. When last measured by the Census in 1949, the value of all livestock and poultry kept on farms amounted to \$4,735,938. More recent estimates based on a larger cattle population and increased liveweight market prices indicate this value approximated \$5,564,100 by 1954.

Total Value of Lincoln County Livestock: \$5,564,100

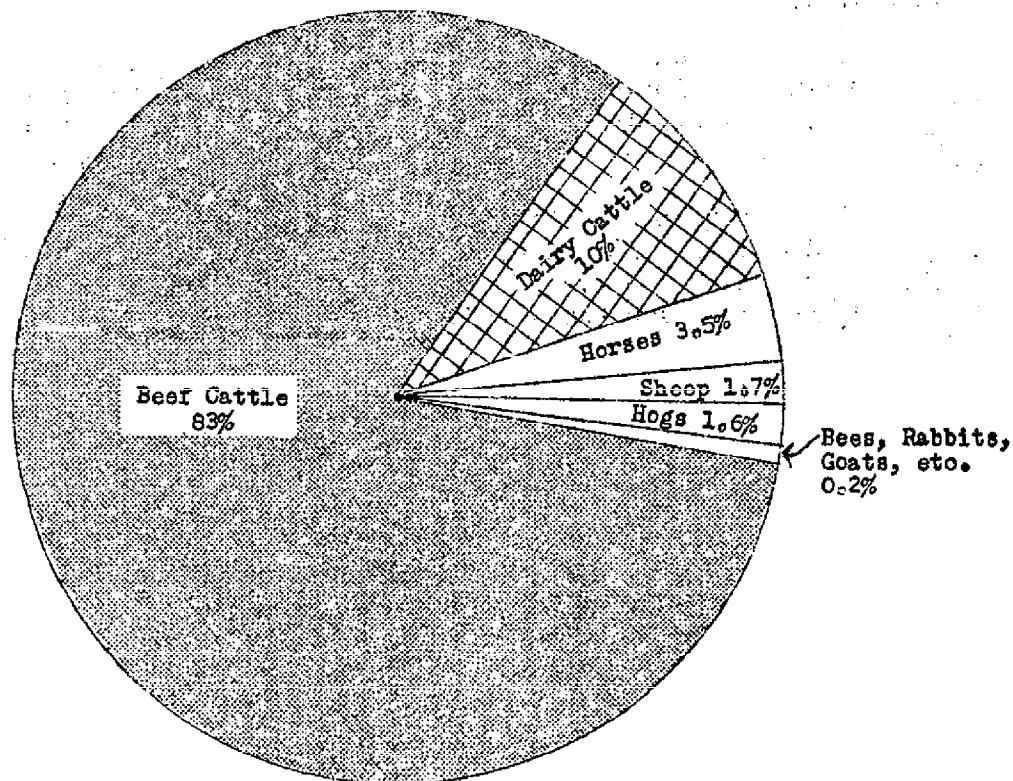


Figure 10.- Value of Livestock on Farms
Lincoln County, 1954
(Based on U.S. Census, Agriculture)

Livestock Trends

Livestock and poultry farming has changed markedly since 1925. Major shifts include an upward trend in beef cattle numbers since 1949 while the number of dairy cattle has moved downward since 1939. Hog numbers have declined to one-half their 1939 total. Sheep flocks have declined greatly with less than one-half as many sheep on Lincoln County farms in 1954 as in 1939. Horses and mules were once the most important class of livestock in the county but there were only 1,300 horses and mules on farms in 1954, compared with 5,800 head during 1939. Poultry numbers also have declined. Turkeys decreased to a small fraction of their pre-war total by 1954. At the same time, chickens have been on a downward trend with about half as many reported in 1954 as during the World War II peak.

Table 23.- Livestock Numbers on Farms
Lincoln County, 1939-1956

Year	January 1 Numbers on Farms		
	All Cattle (head)	Beef Cattle (head)	Dairy Cattle (head)
1939	32,000	22,500	9,500
1940	32,400	23,400	9,000
1941	35,600	27,000	8,600
1942	42,400	34,100	8,300
1943	43,200	33,800	9,400
1944	45,800	37,200	8,600
1945	40,300	32,500	7,800
1946	39,000	30,800	8,200
1947	37,200	30,700	6,500
1948	35,600	29,600	6,000
1949	37,900	32,700	5,200
1950	37,200	32,300	4,900
1951	37,500	33,200	4,300
1952	40,600	37,000	3,600
1953	42,000	38,700	3,300
1954	41,600	38,500	3,100
1955	43,000	39,800	3,200
1956	46,500	43,400	3,100

Source: U.S.D.A., AMS, Estimates Division
State of Washington

Cattle: Beef and Dairy Farming

Raising beef cattle is the major type of livestock farming. The combined total of beef and dairy cattle reached a new high in 1956 with 46,000 head. Beef cattle numbers reached an all-time high of 43,400 head. At the same time, dairy cattle numbers continued at their all-time low of 3,100 head. While cattle numbers are rising there has been a decrease in the number of farms raising cattle, calves and dairy cattle. A total of 18,498 head of cattle and calves were sold alive from 634 farms to meat packers and other buyers of live animals in 1954. The county ranked eighth in the state in number of cattle and calves sold.

Beef cattle numbers have almost doubled since 1939. As a result of World War II and strong demands for beef, cattle reached a peak of 45,800 head in 1944. Numbers then turned downward again until 1948. During the next three years a level of about 33,000 head was maintained. Since 1952 numbers have increased slowly to the present peak of 46,500 head.

Dairy farming is of minor importance in Lincoln County. Most of the milk is sold as whole milk with cream sales secondary. In 1939, almost five million pounds of whole milk were sold from Lincoln County farms and since then there has been a decline in production. Dairy cattle numbers have declined about 1,000 head since 1949. There was a slight increase in annual milk production in 1954, indicating that present dairy herds are more productive per head than in the 1940's.

Selling of cream has declined steadily over the years. Sales of 90,000 pounds of cream in 1954 were only about one-fifth as large as the sales in 1940. Income from cream sales totaled \$47,700 in 1954. The number of farms selling cream dropped to two-thirds of the 1949 total with 226 farms reported in 1954. Larger producers discontinued selling cream and farm-separation of milk and making of butter have become uncommon.

Table 24.- Dairy Products Sold From Farms
Lincoln County, 1939-1954

Year	Whole Milk Sold From Farms		Cream Sold From Farms		Butter Sold From Farms	
	(pounds)	(dollars)	(pounds)	(dollars)	(pounds)	(dollars)
1939	4,927,602	\$209,342	425,040	1/	11,105	---
1944	4,093,286	317,263	343,217	1/	1,099	---
1949	2,559,545	121,607	145,749	\$87,632	1/	---
1954	2,564,903	112,900	89,526	47,699	---	---

1/ Not enumerated in Census because of small volume.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

Sheep

Lincoln County ranks tenth in the state in sheep. Common to most eastern Washington counties, sheep raising has declined since 1939. Sheep numbers reached a high of 19,800 head in 1944 but have declined steadily since then. Large range flocks have been replaced by smaller farm flocks pastured or fed on hay within fenced pastures. By 1954 there were 93 operators keeping 6,512 sheep, an average flocks size of 67 head. Sheep were the second most important income producers among Lincoln County livestock. In 1954, the Census showed 82 farms in the county selling 15,035 sheep and lambs for a gross income of \$236,300. The number of ewes in the county had declined by 1954 to 4,300 head on 89 farms. Sheepmen sold 49,800 pounds of wool in 1954. This was a slight increase over 1949 and was the tenth highest volume in the state.

Hogs

Swine raising has declined greatly during the last 15 years. In 1939, farmers in Lincoln County reported over 5,000 head of hogs. By 1954 this had

decreased to about 2,300 head on 217 farms. The drop in hog numbers came in the post-World War II period. Hog numbers have remained fairly constant since about 1949 but the number of farms keeping hogs for home or custom butchering has declined over the years. Hog raising as a sideline on wheat farms has been discontinued in many cases. In 1954, 132 farmers sold 1,879 hogs alive for \$70,600 gross income which was less than half the hog sales in 1949. Hogs only ranked fourth in Lincoln County's livestock economy in 1954.

Horses and Mules

Horses and mules for farm work have decreased in the last 30 years as tractors and vehicles were put into use. Horses and mules were formerly used in great numbers for plowing and harvesting on wheat farms. Lincoln County ranked ninth in the state in numbers of horses and mules kept on farms in 1954 when the Census reported 1,308 horses and mules--about one-fifth of the number enumerated in 1939. In 1920 horses and mules in Lincoln County numbered about 30,000 and were valued at over \$2,400,000. This was over twice the value of cattle in that year. By 1954 horses and mules were valued at only \$196,000. The greatest decline in horses and mules in recent years came during World War II. During 1954 there were 48 farms that reported 133 head of horses and mules sold. A total of 464 farms in the county reported horses and mules in 1954. Most horses kept today are for riding and livestock herding.

Table 25.-- Hogs, Sheep, Horses and Mules
Lincoln County, 1939-1954

Year	Hogs (head)	Sheep (head)	Horses and Mules (head)
1939	5,028	13,967	5,805
1944	4,942	19,822	3,410
1949	2,354	8,499	1,951
1954	2,286	6,512	1,308

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

Poultry Farming

Poultry raising is a minor specialty on a few farms in the county. There were 449 farms reporting the sale of poultry and/or poultry products in 1954. Commercial egg production is the leading part of the poultry industry but egg production has decreased in recent years. A total of 391 farms sold 234,122 dozen eggs for a gross of \$90,800 during 1954. Chickens reached a peak in 1944 with about 84,700 birds, then declined to 44,000 in 1954. Largest reduction in flocks came in the immediate post-war period. The sale of live poultry for the dressed meat trade occupies a secondary and minor part of the industry and is mostly a result of culling laying flocks. Only one operator was raising broilers in 1954. A total of 220 farms sold 17,400 chickens for \$17,500 in 1954.

Turkeys raised for the market have dropped off greatly in recent years. In 1939 there were 8,500 birds enumerated on Lincoln County farms, contrasted with less than 500 in 1954. Turkey raising has remained of slight importance with small flocks kept on less than 15 farms. In the last ten years only

about 250 to 500 birds per year have been raised. Only four farms kept turkey hens for breeding purposes and the number was almost evenly divided between heavy and light breeds of turkeys.

Table 26.- Chickens, Egg Production and Turkeys
Lincoln County, 1939-1954

Year	Chickens (birds)	Egg Production (dozens)	Turkeys Raised (birds)
1939	78,686	649,482	8,456
1944	84,687	762,661	512
1949	47,197	301,027 ^{1/}	241
1954	44,701	234,122 ^{1/}	354

^{1/} Eggs sold only; does not include home-used eggs.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture